

# The Cause and Meaning of This War

---

*To Those Who Are in the Service of the United States in Its  
Armies and Navies, and to Those Who May Be Called to  
That Service:*

THIS WORLD'S WAR has now been in progress for more than three years. It began when many of you were too young to study its meaning or to take much interest in its progress, since it seemed very unlikely that the United States would be drawn into it. You know that you are in this war, but it is not surprising if a great many of you do not thoroughly understand why you are in this war. It is my purpose to explain to you those reasons briefly and in simple terms. But even to do this will first require some words about man's development in government and the conditions of the warring nations.

The Christian conception of God is that there is an all-wise, an all-powerful, an all-kind Being, Who takes a personal interest in the present and future lives of men. If you apply that idea of a spiritual Being to this earth, all will agree that no people could be better ruled than by such an all-wise, all-powerful, and all-kind King or Emperor; and this was exactly the ancient idea of kingship. The king told his people, and his people believed, that he held his power directly from God and ruled them in accordance with the Divine will. In time, however, the people learned that this could not be so because they were treated with great cruelty and oppression, and thus they came not only to disbelieve in what was known as the "divine right of kings," but they came to believe that they were entitled to a voice in their own destinies. In this belief was the germ of Democracy. The word simply means government by the people, as the word Republicanism means government by the people through representatives. This idea of democracy—of the people coming into their right to govern—took hold and spread over great portions of the civilized earth. In some countries, as in France and America, kingship even in name

was abolished. In other countries the form of kingship was maintained, but the power of kingship was absolutely taken away by the people and given to representatives of their own choosing. Such is the case with England and Italy. The prime minister of England and his fellow ministers are in most real respects like the President of the United States and his cabinet.

### THE EMPIRE OF GERMANY

In two European countries, however, the people for different reasons were slower in securing these governmental powers. These were Russia and Germany. The first by revolution since this war began has put aside its Czar, or king, and has become a democracy. Not so the latter. The Empire of Germany is composed of a number of kingdoms, one of which is the Kingdom of Prussia. These kingdoms, with lesser dukedoms and principalities, were disunited and were in frequent wars until Prussia, the most powerful, by threats, by persuasion and by the strong hand of military conquest, formed out of them the Empire of Germany, over which the King of Prussia should forever be supreme. Thus Prussia, always a military nation, became the ruler of the destinies of the German Empire, and the Kaiser arranged the constitution and laws of the empire so that he should exercise absolute control. The chancellor of Germany is not chosen by the people, like our President or like the prime minister of England. He is appointed by the Kaiser, and is responsible only to the Kaiser. The German Reichstag (or Congress) does not, like the American Congress or the English Parliament, make laws and declare war. It is an empty shell of a congress. It is but a debating society, which can only commend or complain in words which have some influence but no legal force. This Empire of Germany, while before that time in the process of formation, was completed after the Franco-Prussian war in 1870-71, in which war Prussia took from France its provinces of Alsace and Lorraine and imposed on her a very heavy war indemnity, or payment of money. Thereafter the Empire of Germany prospered greatly. It developed within its borders industries of many kinds and carried them to a high state of efficiency. It built a great fleet of merchant vessels to carry its goods to all the markets of the world, and in each of these things the government aided.

With these great steps forward in the arts of peace it soon became apparent that Germany was equally active in the development of everything dealing with war. She trained every one of her young men as soldiers until she did not have an army merely, but the whole nation was an army. She began actively also to build a war fleet, until today that fleet is the second in the world, and surpassed only by England's. She said she was doing these things for peace and to protect herself against possible attack from possible enemies by which she was surrounded, meaning thereby, Russia on the east, and France on the west. She formed a treaty of alliance with Austria-Hungary and with Italy, under which either two was to aid the third under certain conditions. This treaty was known as the "Tri-Partite Alliance," and the nations forming it were known at the outbreak of the war as the Allies. The other powers, Russia, France and England, had no treaty, only what was known as an understanding of what they would do in the event of war, or, in the language of French diplomacy, an "entente," and they came to be known as the "Entente powers." Often, however, they are now spoken of as the "Allies," and Germany and Austria-Hungary as the "Central Powers." They will in this paper so be called.

Notwithstanding Germany's official protestations that her great army and navy were designed only for her defense, many years ago and shortly after her war with France, the professors in her universities and the teachers in her schools, in books and in lectures to their classes, carried on a course of instruction which amounted to this: That throughout all the lower animal kingdom the weaker gave way and were exterminated to make room for the stronger and better; that this was equally true of mankind; that the history of man showed the extinction of numberless tribes and races and peoples, and that this struggle for supremacy must go on; that the German mind and the German character were the highest in the world, and that it was the right and duty of Germany to impress these upon the world by subjugating, and if necessary exterminating, the inferior peoples. The pulpits voiced the same doctrine, thus: "The German people is always right, because it is the German people"; "Germany is the future of humanity"; "The downfall of Germanism would be the downfall of humanity."



The public utterances of the Kaiser through many years showed that he held to the ancient or mediæval idea of the divine right of kings. He "held his powers direct from God"; he was "responsible to no one but God"; "unquestioning obedience was due to him from his people because he was God's representative." Still further, the German leaders under the direction of Prussia developed the idea of the State, of the Government, of Germany, beyond anything ever before taught. The idea of a state, or of a government, or of a nation, in countries such as ours is, is that of a community of people agreeing to live under laws which they themselves frame and execute. They thus organize into a state, not for the purposes of aggression, not to attack other states, but to live peaceable and upright lives, and by organization be prepared to protect themselves against attack. In such a state as this, every person is entitled to a voice in its affairs, to take part in its government, and to suggest improvements in its laws and conditions. In Germany, as an outgrowth of Prussia's teachings, the people were told, and in time, too, a very great part came to believe, that the welfare of the world depended upon Germany; that the German state, the Empire, had a supreme destiny, and this destiny was to achieve the control of the world; and as the German people were the greatest people in the world, so it would be for the benefit of the world when this was done. "Deutschland uber alles" (Germany above all else) was but a popular expression of this. Therefore, the idea of Germany which was taught was that she was a state above all other states, and that nothing which any of her people did, whatever its nature, was or could be wrong so long as it was done under the direction of authority and was therefore necessary for the benefit of the state. So much, then, for the attitude of Germany at the outbreak of the great war. This design of world conquest is what is meant by "Pan-Germanism." For this little review it becomes necessary briefly to consider the positions of the other European nations.

#### AUSTRO-HUNGARY

Germany's ally under the Tri-Partite Alliance is often known as the Dual Monarchy, since the Emperor of Austria is also the King of Hungary. The nation is composed of many peoples

having different racial and different political aspirations. Her ruler, however, is Germanic. For our purposes it is sufficient to say that it is and long has been recognized that in its foreign affairs, in its dealings with other nations over serious international questions, Austria-Hungary has been absolutely dominated by Germany. Austria-Hungary is and has been, as has been Germany, jealous and fearful of the growing power of Russia.

### ITALY

Italy, once the seat of the great Roman Empire, later fell on evil days, until finally she became a part of Austrian territory and subject to Austrian rule. She achieved her independence after a long war and re-established herself as the Kingdom of Italy, a constitutional kingdom not unlike that of England. She did not, however, succeed in acquiring as a part of her kingdom territories inhabited by Italians and lying to the north and east of her peninsula near to the head of the Adriatic sea—Trent and Trieste. She has always contended that these territories should belong to her. This is the meaning of “*Italia Irredenta*”—unredeemed Italy. Her part in this war is devoted to conquering those territories from Austria-Hungary.

### TURKEY

Some centuries ago an insignificant tribe of an Oriental people allied in race to the Tartars or Chinese began, under the leadership of their chief Osman or Othman, a career of conquest. They were of the Mohammedan religion and brought the “Koran, tribute, or the sword.” Their success in war, while remarkable, was not unlike that of other peoples in the early days who by force of military training and superior military leadership from small beginnings achieved great results in conquest. The great Roman Empire, for example, was founded by a small and obscure tribe in central Italy. Alexander the Great was originally but the ruler of one, and that an inferior tribe (except in arms), of the Grecian peoples, the Macedonians. So it was with the Ottoman or Osmanli Turks, as they came to be called. Advancing from their conquests in Asia Minor they swept around both shores of the

Mediterranean sea, conquering Egypt and the south coast of the Mediterranean, conquering Constantinople (the Eastern seat of the Roman Empire) and the adjacent Balkan peninsula, including Greece. They took Constantinople on the Bosphorus (1453) and all the lands lying around the Black sea. From Constantinople they besieged Vienna, and were finally defeated by the Pole, John Sobieski, King of the then Kingdom of Poland, which has since been divided between Prussia, Russia and Austria. After centuries of conflict they lost the territories on the southern shore of the Mediterranean and around the Black sea. They maintained their conquests in Europe nearest to Constantinople, that is, the whole Balkan peninsula. Their possessions in Asia Minor were never seriously interfered with by the countries of Europe. Now here was a people of alien race and speech, of alien religion and with a bitter hostility to Christianity; of foreign laws and customs, and infamous for its brutality and ferocity. These Ottoman Turks were and are in number few compared to their subject peoples, and they ruled wholly by terror and by force of arms. One of these subject peoples in Asia Minor are the Armenians, who had early embraced Christianity and had faithfully adhered to that religion through persecutions infinite in number and dreadful in kind. In Europe, and particularly in the Balkan peninsula, were to the southward the Greeks, famous in history, and north of them smaller countries and peoples, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and still further north, Rumania, a people claiming descent from the Romans (Ruman—Roman). All these peoples were Christians and were subject to the Turks. They were restless under the atrocious rule of their masters and from time to time started wars with more or less success for their independence, but, generally speaking, Europe took very little interest in their affairs, the principal reason for which will hereafter be given. Indeed, the great chancellor, Bismarck, the man who under the Kaiser's grandfather and father did more to shape the policy and success of Germany than did any other man, himself declared that all of the Balkan peninsula "was not worth the bones of one Pomeranian grenadier."



## RUSSIA

Russia was a vast northern empire taking in a large part of Europe and extending across Asia to the Pacific Ocean. She numbers more than two hundred millions of people. Broadly speaking, they are of the Slav race. Here it may be said that all the peoples of Europe (excepting the Turks and Huns) belong to the one Indo-European family of people, which in turn is divided into sub-families, Slavic, Teutonic, Gallic, Latin, etc. Russia with her multitudes and natural sources of wealth has enormous possible powers. Her development has been retarded not alone by her autocratic form of government in which the Czar and his councillors were the supreme rulers, but also because these men vested with these tremendous powers used them unwisely and kept back, rather than advanced the welfare of the nation. The thrust of the Turks into Europe had divided the Slav peoples, for some of the Balkan states, particularly Serbia and Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, were Slavic. Two prominent facts in Russia's national policy are to be remembered. Vast as was her territory, it was all northern territory and her seaports were closed in winter by ice. She needed for commerce at least one "winter port," that is to say, territory fronting on navigable waters which would give her an open harbor through the winter. In her domain lies the Black sea, connected by the narrow waterways, Bosphorus and Dardanelles, with the Mediterranean sea, and so with the oceans of the world. Controlling this outlet were the Turks at Constantinople. The cruelties inflicted by the Turks on the Slavic peoples, their hostility to all forms of modern development, their unreliability and corruption, taken with the needs of Russia herself, dictated the war which about forty years ago (1878) Russia waged against Turkey to drive her out of Europe and secure control of this entrance to the Mediterranean sea. She was successful in this war, but the other European powers at that time, apprehensive of Russia's plans and designs, intervened, blocked her aims and forbade her from taking Constantinople. But at least she succeeded in forcing Turkey to recognize the independence of Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Rumania.

The second of these outstanding facts is that Russia for reasons not necessary to enter into here, but one of which

was the racial consideration, became the "Little Father" of the Slavic Balkan states. Not many years ago (1912) a number of these Balkan states (Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria) formed a confederation to fight in unison and to conquer Turkey in Europe. They were victorious in the war, but were not allowed by the great European powers to have their own way in dividing amongst themselves the conquered territory, nor yet were they allowed, any more than was Russia, to put Turkey out of Europe. Bulgaria considered herself badly treated by the allotment of territory made to her and there followed the second Balkan war, in which Serbia and Greece, who had been given what Bulgaria thought was more than their share of the mountains and plains of Macedonia, joined forces and defeated Bulgaria. Russia, as has been said, had always exercised a friendly influence in behalf of Bulgaria, and the other Slavic states, and Bulgaria was resentful that Russia did not come to her aid in this last war, though how she could have done so as against Serbia, another Slavic state, is not apparent. At the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish war (1878) it was agreed that Austria-Hungary, lying just to the north of the Balkan peninsula and in nearest touch with it, would herself exercise a sort of police protection over some of these disturbed kingdoms (very much like the protection we exercised over Cuba) until they were able satisfactorily to manage their own affairs. Instead of living up to this, however, Austria-Hungary took advantage of Russia's difficulties in her recent war with Japan and publicly announced that she annexed the two states of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These were Slavic states. Serbia believed they would be united with her, as they would have been if allowed a voice in the matter, and the result was to cause great discontent both in Russia and in Serbia. The Kaiser "rattled his saber" and threatened Russia with war if she undertook to interfere. (1908.)

#### FRANCE

The Republic of France had suffered grievously in tribute and in territory in her last war with Germany (1870-1). There had been wrested from her two of her French speaking and France loving provinces—Alsace and Lorraine. It may be said that many in France harbored the hope that some day she



would be able to win back from Germany those lands which German arms had by conquest torn from her, but unquestionably, as France noted the amazing growth in people and power of the German Empire in comparison with her own slower increase in population, this hope waned. The French, however, as was natural, studied Germany's plans and designs with utmost care, and long before the beginning of this war became convinced that those plans contemplated world conquest, and she braced herself, not for aggression, but to meet this great shock. She realized that alone she was helpless against Germany, and she cultivated with Russia and with England, the understanding of which we have spoken, the Triple-Entente. This understanding contemplated no aggressive measures, but dealt with what these nations would do if and when they or any of them were attacked by the Central Powers. It was well known that Austria-Hungary would act as Germany directed. It was feared that Italy because of the Tri-Partite Alliance would join with them. In fact, however, it should here be said that Italy as the third member of the Tri-Partite Alliance refused to join Germany and Austria-Hungary in the war, basing her refusal upon the ground that the Tri-Partite Alliance contemplated the co-operation of the three allies only in a war of defense, and that this war was not defensive, but to the contrary was an aggressive war deliberately brought by Germany and Austria-Hungary.

#### ENGLAND

Because she was an island, because she was a vast manufacturing and exporting country, because she depended largely on importations for her food supply, because her territorial holdings were all over the globe, England for her protection had built and continued to maintain the strongest navy in the world. She had no such trained army as had the European nations. Her whole regular or standing army at the outbreak of the war did not number as many men as are in her Aviation Corps alone today. England, while in name a kingdom, is essentially a republic like the United States. While prepared by her navy to defend her rights and possessions, no sane person has ever said that England contemplated a career of world conquest, and her lack of a great army is a conclusive demon-

stration that no such plan was ever in the minds of her leaders. For a navy alone, while it can protect from sea invasion, can not conquer a defended country. Moreover, her possessions in India, Africa, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand were quite enough for every possible purpose and policy.

#### BELGIUM

The little kingdom of Belgium fronting on the North sea near the English channel, the territory of which is for the most part low-lying plains, had been by treaty guaranteed that in any war her soil would not be invaded. In the ages past her lands repeatedly had been soaked in the blood of warring nations. Her people, few in numbers, had proved that they would fight to the last man in defense of their liberties. Because of their character and location her lands furnished the most accessible method for Germany on the east or France on the west to attack each other. Every European nation in the west, including England, was interested in preserving Belgium's independence; for Germany to control Belgium meant a greatly added threat against France and a greatly added peril to England lying but a few miles across the Channel. Under these considerations France, Austria, Prussia and England by treaty guaranteed not only the independence of Belgium, but her immunity from invasion by any hostile army. Little Belgium, on the other hand, agreed to maintain her neutrality and to use her utmost force to protect her soil against such hostile invasion. Switzerland on the south occupies in this regard very much the situation of Belgium.

#### BULGARIA, GREECE, RUMANIA, AND JAPAN

*Bulgaria*, though Slavic and deeply indebted to Russia for her independence, joined Germany and Turkey (her ancient oppressor) in the conquest of Serbia. She pretended that she did so to regain territory wrongfully taken by Serbia. She really did so under German influence, for Germany had long been engaged in putting German rulers over the Balkan states, and the King of Bulgaria was one of them.

*Greece*, in treaty bound to come to Serbia's aid, did not do so because of German influence. The wife of the ex-King is the Kaiser's sister. The Allies were helpless to save Serbia

and little Montenegro, as to attempt to do so meant leaving a strong Grecian army in their rear which might attack them at any moment. Finally the Allies forced the King of Greece to abdicate, and put his son on the throne; but Greece is now really governed by the people through Venezilos, the Prime Minister, whose sympathies are with the Allies.

*Rumania*, rich in grain and flocks, was always in sympathy with the Allies. She claimed the fertile lands of Transylvania held by Austria but peopled by Rumanians. She entered the war last year and in a short campaign was desolated and destroyed by German, Austrian, and Turkish forces. She openly declares that in this she was betrayed by Russia, which promised to support her and did not. There is no doubt but that the Kaiser's influence over the Czar was very great, as was also the influence of the Czar's German wife, and this was one cause of the Czar's overthrow.

*Japan*, under treaty with England, was called upon to destroy the German menace in the Pacific. She promptly did so, and to her is due the fact that the Pacific Ocean is free from German piracy.

#### POLAND AND BOHEMIA

*Poland*, at one time a kingdom of Europe second in territory only to Russia, was between 1772-1795 dismembered and her lands divided between Prussia, Russia, and Austria. This is known as the "Crime of the Partition of Poland." From time to time she has tried by revolt to achieve her independence, always without success. Kosciusko was one of her revolutionary heroes, and many of you have read how "Freedom shrieked as Kosciusko fell." It is proposed by the Allies to re-establish the Polish nation. For Poland's cause, in sentiment as well as in justice, makes a strong appeal to the world. When her king, John Sobieski, defeated and beat back the Turks he not only saved Austria, but perhaps all Europe from Turkish domination. So great was the relief and joy that the prelates of the Christian churches preached from the Biblical text, "There was a man sent by God: and his name was John."

*Bohemia*, Slavic in race, and at one time an independent kingdom, is now under Austrian rule. Years ago she called a convention of all the Slavic peoples under Austrian domination, but it resulted only in a successful attack on her by Austria.



## GERMANY'S CHANGED WORLD POLICY

Germany's World Policy changed after the time when her great chancellor Bismarck said that the whole Balkan peninsula was not worth "the bones of one Pomeranian grenadier." The change was with the object of which we have before spoken, the deliberate plan that Germany should conquer the world, due to the belief entertained that she could do this thing. Such plans are not matured and put into action in a day. A nation expects to live forever and tries to look far into the future in figuring out its welfare. Bismarck taught the very sound military policy of defeating your enemies in detail, and in the case of a nation which you propose to conquer to single out that nation and isolate it from other nations by persuasion, coercion or alliance, so that you can attack and subdue it without trouble. Germany's plan then contemplated as matter of course not to conquer the world at large by declaring a general war upon it, but beginning with Europe to bring in detail and one by one its nations under her subjection. In the years of her preparation she busied herself astoundingly in the development of her army and of her navy and refused at the suggestion of England to join with her in decreasing the building of warships. She seized upon two American inventions, the submarine and the flying machine, and secretly developed and improved them. She formulated the plan of first cutting Europe and Asia Minor in two by a control of continuous territory from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf. A glance at the map will show what this meant. It meant the gathering in of Holland and Belgium, the reduction of France to a subordinate power, the forcing of Russia in part, if not in whole, out of Europe, the domination of Turkey in Europe and of Turkey's possessions in Asia Minor, and the extension of this power to the head of the Persian Gulf. She realized that the solution of the French and Russian problem, as well as the problem of Holland and Belgium, could only come by war. Turkey could be controlled under a German protectorate, and to this end some years ago this Christian Kaiser went to Turkey, the oppressor of all Christian peoples, and publicly declared himself to be Turkey's protector and the protector and defender of the Mohammedan faith. He easily procured the concession to build his railroad through Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf.

But to bring that railroad to the heart of Germany it was necessary to carry it from Constantinople west and northward. The only feasible route for this was through the Balkan peninsula and so through Serbia, and here and for this reason, little Serbia became of consequence to Germany's plans. This road, as is quite plain to be seen, was designed to be a great military highway from any point of which Germany could reach out to the north or south, east or west. It was the direct means when the time came for the subjection of Persia, India, Egypt, and Russia's southern possessions. It gave the same control over the Balkan peninsula and it afforded Germany an incomparable advantage in the swift movement of trained troops upon which success in war so much depends. Germany also built the Kiel Canal through the base of the Danish peninsula, thus giving her a protected water connection for her largest warships between the North Sea and the Baltic. Her railroad, it is apparent, to be available for military purposes must run wholly through German lands or lands friendly to Germany. As has been said, it had to cross and did cross Serbia. Serbia, though an independent kingdom, was by race and sympathy allied to Russia. It was thoroughly well known that Russia had declared that she would protect the interests of the Balkan Slavic states. Serbia was resentful at Austria's treatment of her in depriving her of the two countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which if allowed a voice in their own affairs would have joined the Kingdom of Serbia. It was no part of Germany's plans to allow Serbia thus to increase her power, and so it was that Austria herself annexed these two Slavic countries. Turkey in Europe and the Balkan peninsula are known as the "Near East," and so we read much of the "Near East" difficulties.

#### THE OUTBREAK

We may now with understanding come to the middle of the year 1914, whose first of August saw the outbreak of the great war. In the light of the disclosures down to date it is beyond debate that Germany forced this war, believing that the opportune time had come for her to establish her supremacy over all Europe saving England. She was advised through her spies and agents that the Russian government would be lukewarm under attack. She believed, also, that Russian official corruption was so great that her army and navy would both be

wholly unprepared. She knew, moreover, that for lack of transportation facilities it would be a slow and laborious process for Russia to mobilize or gather together her soldiers. As to France she believed that the Republic's military power was negligible, and she knew that she had defeated her in 1870-71 in a very brief whirlwind campaign. Many of the newspapers of France were publicly lamenting and deploring the inefficiency of the army in all departments. Italy she believed would join in the offensive under the Tri-Partite Alliance, or at the worst would remain neutral. England was involved in grave internal disturbances over the Irish Home Rule question. There had already been arming and a local revolt in a northern province of Ireland. The Kaiser was the declared defender and protector of Mohammedanism. In India, which numbered millions of Mohammedans, it was thought possible for Germany, through the Sultan of Turkey, to incite a *Jehad*, or holy war, by the Mohammedans against the Christians. These considerations, with her contempt for England's insignificant standing army, led Germany to believe that England would remain neutral in case she attacked Russia and France. The conquest of these would make easy, in the peace settlement, her demand for supremacy over Holland and Belgium. Serbia must in some way be gathered in or crushed. With these European nations thus subjected and with their fleets gathered together with her own, the downfall of England would come as a later and comparatively easy step. The Americas were to follow next, and we have the authority of our own former ambassador to Germany, besides much other evidence, that Germany's plans for the invasion and conquest of the United States had been thoroughly formulated.

While it used to be a recognized thing that a nation would make war purely for the sake of conquest, international morality has reached the point where such wars are looked on with strong disfavor. So true is this that few nations could hope to receive the ardent support of even their own peoples in any war unless those peoples believed the war to be a just war. So it was that the great Bismarck said that "A war to be a success must be popular, and to be popular you must make your people believe that they have been attacked." With every plan arranged, even to the violation of her solemn treaty with



Belgium, with the opportune moment, as she believed, at hand, Germany must still await an excuse to cover up the frightful crime she planned to commit. This excuse she made out of the murder, on June 28, 1914, of the heir apparent to the throne of Austria-Hungary and his wife while they were traveling in Bosnia. Bosnia, it will be remembered, was a part of the Austrian dominion. They were killed by a Bosnian assassin who sprang upon the steps of their carriage and shot them both to death. It was manifestly the crime of an anarchist, like the earlier murder in Switzerland of the elderly wife of the Emperor of Austria. Though atrocious in itself, and though it excited a wave of horror and indignation, it had no political significance. Time passed. The outside world was thinking of other things. Even the statesmen of the Allied nations had considered the episode closed, when from a clear sky, without the slightest preliminary warning, Austria on July 23, 1914, served an amazing ultimatum on Serbia. It is unnecessary here to go into the details of Austria's demands. They were of a most humiliating character. Austria charged Serbia with having permitted and fostered the conspiracy which resulted in the deaths of the heir apparent and his wife. Arrests must be made. Trials must be had under the domination of Austria. Humble confessions of fault and promises of good conduct must be read before the Serbian army. Civil and military officers of the Serbian kingdom must be dismissed. This and much more Austria demanded of little Serbia. The statesmen of the world agree that never had such demands, couched in such terms, been made upon any independent nation, and that the terms were deliberately chosen so that Serbia could not accept them, and thus Austria, under her ultimatum, would declare war against her. What would then result was well known. Russia, in treaty and in honor bound, would protect Serbia against destruction, and to do this would wage war against Austria. Germany, in treaty bound, would then come to the aid of Austria. France by her Entente bond would support Russia, and the war which Germany desired and planned would thus be brought about. Serbia's time to answer Austria's ultimatum was limited to forty-eight hours. England, France, Russia and Italy were one and all earnestly desirous of preventing a European war, and their statesmen bent their

most active energies to this end. Serbia, under the direction of Russia, in the hope of averting war made a response marvelous in its humility, conceding all of Austria's demands saving one, and as to that (trials in Serbia under Austrian control) agreeing to submit the question for determination to the great Hague Peace Tribunal. So completely did Serbia consent to obey Austria's demands that the newspapers of Berlin published the declaration that Serbia had yielded and that war was averted. Within two hours after those papers appeared upon the streets they were suppressed and the same newspapers published the contrary declaration, that Serbia had rejected Austria's demands and that war was inevitable. Meantime, and while the diplomats were active day and night in their exchange of suggestions and advice, Austria mobilized against Serbia, and Russia mobilized against Austria. All possible efforts were made by England, by France, by Italy and by Russia to avert the catastrophe, and their pleas were, of course, made to Germany, because it was well known that she could control Austria's action. Germany, while expressing a desire for peace, refused to do anything, basing her refusal on the ground that the honor of her ally Austria was involved and that on a question of honor every nation must decide for itself. Apparently Austria herself grew terrified over the impending consequences of her action, and listened to one of Russia's suggestions for a "localization" of the war, or, in other words, it was contemplated that Austria might punish but not subjugate Serbia, might send an army across the Danube river and take Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, and stop there, holding that capital pending permanent terms of reconciliation. But this would have meant the total breaking down of the execution of Germany's long cherished plan, and she then intervened. Germany, in turn, served an ultimatum upon Russia, in which she declared that which was denied and was manifestly false, that Russia was mobilizing her forces against *her*, and she demanded instant demobilization of *all* of Russia's forces within twenty-four hours. This was designed to be a demand impossible to comply with. Russia replied, so stating, and stated further her pending negotiations with Austria and her hope that the war could be "localized." Then it was that Germany, herself already mobilized, declared war. Then it was that the

Kaiser dramatically announced to his people that Germany's war was a war of defense; that her enemies "had thrust the sword into his hand," and that he would not sheathe it until the Fatherland stood secure in all its rights against the oppression of its conscienceless foes. Then it was that Germany, under the plan long prearranged, hurled her armies into Belgium, violated her treaty with that gallant little nation, and sought to take Paris and conquer France by this swift and treacherous movement, for she knew that France would not expect such perfidy and so would not be prepared to meet her on the Belgian front. Then it was that under the protestation of England that, being a signer of this treaty, she could not look on in silence at its violation, the Chancellor of Germany contemptuously asked if England would go to war for a "scrap of paper" and "for a word-neutrality," and then it was that England aligned herself with the Entente powers and entered the war.

No human being acts from a single, unmixed motive. Neither does any nation. Undoubtedly England did a very brave thing in staking her future, as she knew she was doing, upon the outcome of this great adventure. For she was under no delusions concerning its gravity. She knew it was a life or death struggle. Undoubtedly, while one of the motives which actuated and justified her was the sacrilege committed on Belgium and the violation of a treaty to which England herself was a party, she saw clearly what the United States has come to see, that only in this war lay her own safety; that Germany's conquest of Europe as the first step meant the conquest of Great Britain as the second step and the conquest of the United States as the third step. These considerations in no way detract from, but intensify England's justification in doing as she did.

#### THE VITAL CONTROVERSY

Government, as we have said, is a matter of development, and it grows better and more humane as the people of the government themselves grow wiser and more tolerant. There is no nation which possesses any long history in whose record we can not find unjustifiable wars and the oppression of weaker peoples, but it is a part of the growth of morality as well as a part



of the doctrines of Christianity that such wars and oppressions should cease. It used to be held that the welfare of a nation justified every act of its rulers; so it was said that "expediency is the morality of the statesman." In a sentence, this meant that while it would be criminal for you to murder your neighbor because you coveted his land, it would be justifiable for a nation to perpetrate wholesale murder if it coveted another nation's land. Civilization now applies to a nation's act or right to act the same moral rules by which an individual's conduct is adjudged. Germany alone holds to the old doctrine that the state may err, but can do no wrong. Moreover, the wisdom of modern statesmanship recognizes that peoples should be united in a government wherever possible in accordance with race, and that to the citizens of each government should be given a large and an ever larger voice in its control, until they are fitted to exercise complete self-rule. The very strength of England in her far scattered colonies and possessions lies in the fact that she recognizes the wisdom of this and has allowed all of those colonies and possessions the utmost liberty of government and of action.

The essence of this controversy, the very vitals of this war, are whether the German idea shall prevail or the idea held by those countries which are warring against it. Germany's dominant idea, as we have said, is that she, her morals, her "kultur," her ideas, are the best *in* the world and that therefore it is best *for* the world that they be forced upon it at whatever cost. If a people is subjugated or even exterminated, it is to make room on the face of the earth for a higher and better people—the German people. Radically opposed to this, in irreconcilable hostility to it, is the conception of the Allies that every people upon the earth should be allowed to work out freely its own development, its own culture, its own ideas of government, and all things else so long as it does not interfere with the same rights of other nations.

This is what our President means when he says that we are fighting to make the world safe for democracy and that our war is not against the German people. Their rulers and leaders of thought have done this awful thing, and the German people, as all loyal people should do, are but following their leaders. The people have been wickedly blinded and are being

very evilly led. Given a voice in their government, given a Democracy, neither they nor any other people in the world having such a voice, would enter on such a ghastly career of world destruction.

This is what the Prime Minister of England, expressing the same thought in different language, means when he says that the Allies do not pretend to dictate how Germany shall govern herself; but when it comes to treaties of peace, the Allies have the right to say with what government they will make such treaties, and they can not make them with the present German government, because truth and honor and fidelity to the pledged word are not in her rulers; that such fidelity is not only vital to every transaction between men, but is the foundation stone of civilization itself.

#### GERMANY'S CRIMES AGAINST THE CIVILIZED WORLD AND AGAINST THE UNITED STATES

The psychologists, the men who study the workings of the human mind, precisely as your physician and surgeon study the workings of the human body, all agree that if you keep a person entirely under the influence of one idea, however awful or absurd that idea may be, if his reason be not appealed to by contrary arguments, he will in an extraordinarily short space of time come firmly to believe that which is thus taught him, and particularly is this true if the human being is in the younger and more impressionable age. Thus they say: Teach a young fellow that it is not only no crime to steal, but that it is a good thing to steal, subject him to the force of this idea and its evil influences, and in time you will not only have a skilled pickpocket, but even worse than that, you will have a pickpocket who believes that he is doing right. In this way, as has been before said, the youth of the German nation in successive generations have been trained to believe, and most of them profoundly believe the truth of their teaching, that where Germany is concerned nothing which is ordered can be wrong. We will return to this amazing belief shortly. For the moment let us pass on to this fact: The civilized world generally has come to recognize that war at its best is hideous, at its worst is unspeakable. All of the nations agree that its horrors and

sufferings should be lessened so far as possible. Holland built a superb courthouse in one of its cities, The Hague, where disinterested and impartial learned men selected by all the nations should meet as a court and pass upon the merits of disputes between nations, a Court of Arbitration to avert war. Conferences between representatives of nations were also there held from time to time to agree upon the doing and the not doing of things in war, to lessen the woes and sufferings which inevitably it produced. To these conferences Germany sent her representatives. In these conferences many things were agreed upon, to which the consenting nations bound themselves. Amongst these things were that in the event of war the civilian non-fighting population should be disturbed as little as possible, and they should not be injured in person or in property. Unfortified cities should not be fired on, and fortified cities should only be fired on after warning to the garrison, so that the non-fighting population could be sent away. Warfare itself was to be made less horrible for the soldier as by prohibiting certain kinds of offensive weapons, such as the dum-dum bullet, which splits and creates frightful jagged wounds. Poisoned gases were not to be employed. Many other similar regulations were laid down and agreed to. There is little or no exaggeration in saying that Germany has violated every one of these, wilfully and wantonly. We need not undertake to give a complete list of these outrages. A few conspicuous examples will serve to show their nature. Violating her treaty with Belgium and capturing most of that country, she took the private money of the banks and she levied and is levying enormous tribute upon the cities. She stripped the factories of their machinery. She took the food supplies. She left millions of people to starve, and they would have starved, saving for the food sent them by other countries. This is the meaning of the Belgian Relief Commission which until the time of our declaration of war had for its head an American, Mr. Hoover, now the head of our Food Control Board. Having rendered it impossible for the inhabitants of Belgium to work by depriving them of all their tools and resources, she made this an excuse for carrying thousands and tens of thousands of them into actual slavery, and compelling them to work for her. She did worse than this. She set them at work directed against the lives of their own



countrymen, in making munitions and in digging trenches. She did not stop here. The girls and women were likewise deported, and they also by the thousands and tens of thousands were made the victims of the lust of the German soldiers. Thousands on thousands of the peaceful citizens, including women, children, and priests, were murdered because of crimes which it was declared not they, but other Belgian civilians, had committed. She inflicted hideous mutilations on wounded prisoners, and deliberately underfed them and exposed them to deadly contagious diseases in her prison camps. She maimed helpless little children by cutting off their hands and feet. She did exactly the same things to the people and to the conquered territory of France and Russian Poland. In their African possessions before the advance of the English forces the Germans retreated and poisoned the wells as they retreated. They did this to kill the victorious enemy, and their commanding officer has officially admitted that he did this and has justified it as a "military necessity." Over England they have sent their air ships, which have dropped hundreds of tons of bombs on unfortified towns, ruthlessly killing women and children. The Turks, outnumbered by their Christian subjects, and doubly embittered over the uprising of those Christian subjects in the Balkan wars, had conceived the infamous design of murdering all Christians. In particular their hostility was directed against the Armenians, of whom we have spoken, and whose country is in Asia Minor. The Armenians are a very ancient people, and early in the history of Christianity embraced that religion. They have held to it through indescribable woes and adversities, although by accepting the Koran they could have had relief. It was this far-away people that in Asia Minor lent aid to the Christian crusaders in the first crusade sent out to rescue the Holy Sepulcher from the Turkish infidels. For years the name of Turk has been so horrible to western civilization that they had come to be called the "unspeakable Turk," and for two generations and more history has recorded their barbarities to the Armenians, until "Armenian atrocities" came to be a diplomatic phrase. Taking advantage of this war, the Turks, allies of Germany and absolutely subject to her will, began literally the extermination of the Armenians. The Christian nations made their appeal to the Kaiser, the neutral nations as well as

the warring nations. One shake of his head would have stopped this infamous work. He refused even that upon the ground that he could not interfere with the internal affairs of his allies, and as one of the Kaiser's greatest crimes in this war stands the murder, under all forms of Oriental barbarity, ferocity, and torture, of over one million Armenian men, women, and children.

Enough of these world crimes which, hideous as they are, only indirectly affected ourselves. Germany did not pause here. She undertook to beat England to her knees by what she called a blockade, but this blockade, since England's fleet had driven her fleet off the seas, was to be maintained, not by the seizure of merchant vessels carrying goods to England, but by the destruction of all vessels by submarines. Now it is and has been the international law of the high seas that no neutral vessel may be disturbed at all, even in going to a blockaded port, unless she carries what is known as "contraband of war." Contraband of war for our purposes may be defined as goods, munitions of war or other materials out of which munitions of war are made, and those things designed for the aid of the fighting enemy. Even when a neutral vessel was carrying such things she was secure against injury, much more destruction, unless it was necessary to fire on her to prevent her efforts to escape. Such vessels were liable to be seized and searched, and if innocent of carrying contraband were to be allowed to go on their way. If carrying contraband they could be taken to a port of the capturing ship and there the questions touching the ship and its cargo, such as whether or not it was carrying contraband, what in fact was its destination, etc., were tried before a court known as the Prize Court. In addition to this no merchant vessel, not even an enemy's vessel subject to capture, could be destroyed at sea unless provision was made for the safety of its crew and passengers. All these accepted rules of international warfare at sea Germany treated as a piece of waste paper, precisely as she had treated her compact with Belgium. The nations were horrified over the destruction of the *Lusitania*, a harmless, unarmed passenger vessel carrying over two hundred American men, women and children, and sent to the bottom by a torpedo fired by a German submarine without the slightest regard to the appalling loss of

human life which resulted. Our government protested, and while a correspondence was carried on between the two, Germany continued to destroy all merchant vessels which her submarines could reach. The *Lusitania* was sailing under the English flag, but Germany destroyed in the same manner vessels sailing under the American flag, with the loss of the lives of American citizens. Finally, under repeated protests and repeated warnings from this government she agreed to suspend this "unrestricted use of the submarine weapon" and no longer thus wantonly and illegally to destroy at least neutral merchant vessels. She observed this agreement for a measurable length of time. It appears plainly now from her own declarations that she did so only to lull our indignation and alarm while she was building more submarines. Then, in January of this year, she served formal notice upon the United States that she would resume her ruthless submarine warfare and, within a described zone which surrounded the British Islands and extended down the coast of France into the Mediterranean sea, would destroy every vessel which her submarines could attack, and she concluded this declaration of frightfulness with the contemptuous and designedly insulting concession that she would permit a limited number of American ships to sail the high seas and go to English ports, provided they entered and left those ports at a given time, by given routes, painted like zebras to distinguish them, and under guarantees given by our government to the German government that they carried no contraband. Our government had borne all these wrongs with great patience and with utmost forbearance. But here at last, and after all that patience and forbearance, Germany had served final notice that none of our rights would be respected and that we could gain a measure of security only by a concession which would amount to an acknowledgment of her supremacy over us. She had during the time we were at peace with her, caused, through her spies operating directly under her Ambassador at Washington, the destruction of our shipping and of our munition plants. She had even plotted and urged Mexico and Japan to wage war on us, promising aid and a division of our territory. And so came the sure knowledge that Germany's hand was in truth against us, as it was against all the world, and that we must make war upon her not alone to prevent a repetition and recur-



rence of the wrongs which she had inflicted and proposed to inflict upon us, but that we must fight for the preservation of our government and the security of our own firesides, or the infamies which she had perpetrated upon Belgium and France she would perpetrate also upon us.

Though the immediate battle line to which you men will go is drawn the length of Europe, you are fighting as truly for the defense of your homes as though that battle line were drawn from New York to New Orleans and you were aligned to the west of it. In this strife, so much greater are the issues at stake than ever they have been in any preceding war that our President says, and says truly, that you are not only warring for the freedom of our own institutions, that you are not only battling for Democracy at home, but you are fighting the battle of Democracy, of liberty, of right, and justice, for the whole world.

Something has been said to you touching the perversion of German thought under her teaching. The same teaching justifies as "military necessities" all the atrocities which Germany commits. Listen to this from one of the great leaders in the German Reichstag, Erzberger, a man who calls himself a Christian: "The more pitiless and cruel war is the more humane it is, because it is then more quickly brought to a satisfactory end. In warfare the greatest absence of scruples, if one sets about the matter intelligently, coincides, in reality, with the greatest humanity. When we are in a position to wipe out London by a method in our possession, it is more humane to do so than to allow a single one of our German comrades to shed his blood on the field of battle, for so radical a cure would bring peace as quickly as possible. Hesitation, temporizing, sentimentality, and consideration are unpardonable weaknesses. A decided, unscrupulous action—a display of efficiency—and victory follows."

#### PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

Germany hoped by a swift attack upon her unprepared adversaries to bring her war to a speedy and successful conclusion. She took Belgian, French, Russian, Serbian, and Rumanian territory, but in every essential she failed. She won victories, but she could not conquer, and she has come to realize that she

can not conquer. She has succeeded only in arousing against her the just wrath of an outraged world. She is willing now, more than willing, to cry quits, so that at some future time she may try it again. This calling it quits, this "draw," and a peace on that basis, is the meaning of the *status quo ante bellum* of which you now hear so much. The Latin words mean a return to conditions exactly as they were before the war.

Consider this: A gang of bandits attacks your home town, murders your friends, robs the banks and commercial houses, outrages the women, sets fire to homes, and retreats, carrying away a number of innocent girls. The sheriff organizes a posse, pursues and surrounds the bandits in the hills. You are a member of that posse. The bandit chief sends word to the sheriff as follows: "We did you up in that little encounter, and we can do it again. However, we don't insist on that. We don't want any more trouble. Let's call the whole thing off. Let's restore the *status quo ante*, as the book sharps call it. We will even return the girls." What would you think of such a proposal? Exactly what you would think of it is exactly what the Allied nations think of the proposal for a compromise peace on the basis of the *status quo ante*.

The Allies, under the leadership of our President, have declared that this can not be; that fundamentally this war will have been fought in vain unless by its outcome it shall be made impossible for Germany to wage another such; that the crimes of peaceful lands laid desolate, and thousands of peaceful citizens murdered, outraged and carried into slavery can not be condoned by an offer merely to restore those desecrated lands; besides *restoration* there must be *reparation* for the past and *security* for the future. Who can question either the moderation or necessity of this?

#### THE DUTY OF SOLDIER AND CIVILIAN

Here, then, is not only our cause of war, but our necessity for war, and he who pleads that cause may stand upright and unashamed before the judgment seat of God and man. And what is the duty of us, the people, the self-governing people of this country? It is, whether soldier, sailor, or civilian, to yield not only unquestioned obedience, but ardent service to our rulers. The voice of all criticism should be stilled unless that

voice can with certainty speak in helpful suggestion. Amidst the perils and woes of the nation there is no place for malice or for spite. He is no American, and is at heart a traitor, who does not warmly, cheerfully, hopefully, and to the very best of his ability, uphold the hands and aid the work of our rulers—rulers whom we ourselves have deliberately chosen and placed in the seats of authority to guide the destinies of our beloved country.

### To You

In this war, as in no other, all the most highly developed nations of earth are at death grips with each other. The world's inventive genius is turned to destruction. Young men who would have achieved eminence in art, in science, in literature, have gone cheerfully to their deaths. Millions of others who should have led peaceful lives as the fathers of the generation next to come are counted but as the "unknown, unnumbered servants of the sword." Civilization itself is rocked as by a gigantic earthquake, from turret to foundation stone. "The treasures of Nature's germin tumble all together e'en till Destruction sickens." And in this greatest of all great catastrophes you are called to bear your part. Is it worth while? If you respect womanhood, there can be but one answer. If you love the women of your own family, there can be but one answer. If you honor the country which has cherished you and given you an independence unparalleled, there can be but one answer. If you believe that the United States should not bend its neck to any yoke, there can be but one answer. If you hold that the peoples of the world are entitled to work out their destinies as freemen, there can be but one answer. Unless you believe that there is no aspiration of man so noble as to justify him in risking his life for its attainment, unless you believe that it matters not how a man lives so long as he holds on to life, there can be but one answer. Twenty-four hundred years ago, at the end of a desolating war, Greece at Platæa won a decisive victory over her Persian invaders and drove them finally and forever from her land. To her soldiers who fell in battle she erected a monument. For that monument her poet, Simonides, wrote the epitaph. In that epitaph he made the dead heroes speak, and this is what they said: "*If to die nobly is*



*the chief part of excellence, to us out of all men Fortune gave this lot: For hastening to set a crown of freedom on Hellas, we lie possessed of praise that grows not old."* By so much as the freedom of the world today is of greater moment than the freedom of Greece of old, in that larger measure does this epitaph in all its truth, simplicity, and grandeur befit and belong to those of whom may be demanded the supreme sacrifice, for you will lie possessed of praise that can never grow old.

F. W. HENSHAW,  
*Associate Justice Supreme Court of California.*

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA,

July 16, 1918.

CHARLES F. D. BELDEN, State Director,  
Library War Service,  
Boston Public Library.

You are authorized to reprint or make any other use of my little pamphlet. It was written solely with the design of telling our boys what they were called on to fight for and against. I am pleased that you think I have succeeded.

(signed) F. W. HENSHAW.

This edition of 1,000 copies purchased and distributed by  
THE FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION  
OF MASSACHUSETTS.